

MAY 1905 4 (5)

## MORLEY'S PHILATELIC JOURNAL.

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PHILATELIC JOURNAL.

2/6 per annum, post free, to all countries.  
Subscriptions commence with the January No.

All editorial communications should be  
addressed to

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STREATHAM, LONDON, S.W.,  
ENGLAND.

All business matters are referred to the  
Publisher:

WALTER MORLEY, 15, Brownhill Gardens,  
Catford, London, S.E., England.

Publishers of Magazines who desire to  
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## EDITORIAL.

ON another page will be found the first official announcement with respect to the International Philatelic Exhibition to be held next year. It is the intention of the working Committee to issue these notices from time to time so that collectors may keep in touch with the progress of the arrangements. The Hall International which has been engaged for Philatelic Exhn. the Exhibition is a new one, 1906. having been open barely a year, but it seems that it will leave nothing to be desired in the way of a locale for the Exhibition. The floor space available is 13,000 square feet, all top lighted, while there are several rooms available for Committee rooms, etc. There are perfect summer ventilating arrangements, fresh air being forced through cold water into the Hall at four different points each some 12 feet from the ground, the exhausted air being carried away by an electric fan in the roof. Further for cooling purposes water is laid on to the top of the roof and can be run down over the glass when it gets too hot. There are also outside sun-blinds to cover the glass at those places when the sun shines most. The Exhibition will be opened about the 23rd May.

The prospectus of the Exhibition has been in active preparation and will be issued as soon as it has been passed by the Grand Committee which will soon be called together. The Exhibition will probably be confined exclusively to postage stamps as it is expected there will be no room for entires, fiscals or philatelic publications. The chief features of the prospectus will be an entirely new arrangement of classes e.g. Great Britain and Colonies are not to be shown in classes by themselves but will be mixed with other countries, the different countries being arranged in groups of approximately equal difficulty irrespective of their

political relations; the creation of a championship class in which all collections which have won a gold medal in any previous exhibition in London or Manchester will have to compete but no collection, the owner of which aspires to the highest honours, will be barred in this class; a liberal provision has been made for medium and junior collectors.

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We think it may be worth while to reproduce here the following interesting note concerning Hong Kong stamps overprinted "S. O." and "S. D." contributed by Commander W. C. Eaton (U.S. Navy) to *Gibbons Stamp Weekly*. "In your answer to the corresponding Hong Kong" "ents in Vol. I, No. 11, of the *Fiscals*. "weekly, you say the letters "S. "O." and "S. D." on Hong Kong "stamps are probably the initials of the "mercantile firms using the stamps. I confess "I am considerably surprised at this statement "from so learned an authority as Stanley "Gibbons, or the Editor of the *Weekly* and beg "permission to set your readers right. I "happened to be in Hong Kong shortly after "the stamps were put in use, and learned that "this surcharge was an official one of the "Treasury Department. The first surcharge "S. O." stood for "Stamp Office" but as this "was considered erroneous it was shortly "changed to "S. D." which stood either for "Stamp Department" or "Stamp Duty"; "after this length of time I am not quite certain "which, but my recollection is that it was "Stamp Department" i.e. in lieu of "Stamp "Office." This surcharge made the stamps "fiscal as well as postal. On learning of their "existence I went personally to the Treasury, "where I purchased the few remaining, only "eight or ten of them being left, which I used "upon letters, and it was at the Treasury that "I gained the information given above. On "inquiry at the Post Office as to whether "fiscals could still be used as postage I was "told that they could not be so accepted with "the exception of these "S.O."s & "S.D."s. "I was told that this surcharge, though making "them available for fiscal use, did not affect "their postal character, and they are, therefore, "in the same class as other British Colonial "Postage and Revenue" issues and should be "catalogued among the postal issues. I have "several on original covers which I myself "used. These were not cancelled by favour of "any postal clerk, but were regularly dropped "in the ordinary letter-box and delivered in "the usual way. A very interesting variety of "these stamps exists. Among the eight or ten "I purchased at the Treasury were two 2c. on "which a vertical bar had been printed over "the left curve of the "O" thus transforming "it into a "D" in accordance with the correct "surcharge. Of these I know of only two "copies used postally, the one in my own "collection and the other in the collection of "Mr. Luff, of philatelic fame, both on original "covers. I trust that the above will cause "recognition of these stamps in the class where "they belong i.e. of British Colonial "Postage "and Revenue" stamps."